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Letter dated 10 June 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter dated 7 June 1991 addressed to you by His Excellency Osman Ertuğ, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 43, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mustafa AKSIN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 7 June 1991 from Mr. Osman Ertuğ to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 27 May 1991 addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Rauf R. Denktaş, President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, a copy of which is attached, concerning the recent developments in the mixed village of Pyla, situated in the buffer zone (see appendix).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 43, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Osman ERTUĞ
Representative of the Turkish
Republic of Northern Cyprus

APPENDIX

Letter dated 27 May 1991 from Mr. Rauf Denktas to the Secretary-General

I would like to bring to your kind attention the latest developments in the village of Pyla, which are of great concern to us. As you are no doubt well aware, Pyla is the only village in the island co-inhabited by Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, with the special status of being in the United Nations-controlled Buffer Zone. Presently, Pyla has a mixed population of some 425 Turkish Cypriots and 750 Greek Cypriots. Admittedly, the mixed village of Pyla assumes special significance by virtue of constituting a test case for intercommunal relations.

On previous occasions I had the opportunity to convey to Your Excellency, through your Special Representative Mr. Camilion and UNFICYP Commander General Milner, the difficulties the Turkish Cypriot inhabitants of Pyla have been encountering. For quite some time now, the Turkish Cypriot inhabitants of Pyla have been under an economic siege. In line with its coercive policy of inhuman embargo and isolation against the Turkish Cypriot people, the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus continues to apply economic pressure on the Turkish Cypriots in Pyla with a view to weakening them economically while isolating them from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. As you may be well aware, Greek Cypriots who purchase any kind of goods from Turkish Cypriot villagers are arrested and face trial, and in addition to receiving heavy legal penalties, are branded as traitors for having defied the national policy of economic embargo imposed on the Turkish Cypriots.

Lately, the situation in Pyla, far from improving, has taken a turn for the worse. The Greek Cypriot side has extended its inhuman embargo in the economic sphere to the social, cultural and religious spheres. As evidence of this more hostile posture, in the first instance, we have witnessed the efforts on the part of the Greek Cypriots to bar the Yakif Trust administrators of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus from constructing a minaret to the existing mosque in the village, through a campaign of distortion. This Greek Cypriot attempt to highly politicize the building of a minaret and their irrational reaction to it, is truly unwarranted considering that the Turkish Cypriot side showed no reaction to the Greek Cypriots' earlier restoration of two churches in the village.

Second, in Pyla there is only one telephone line connecting the village with the Turkish Cypriot side for public use and the Turkish Cypriot inhabitants of Pyla have access to a single telephone: that of the "Mukhtar" (Head Man). Attempts are being made by the Greek Cypriot Administration for the prevention of a project by the Turkish Cypriot Telecommunications Department to extend telephone services in the Turkish Cypriot houses at the village. The Turkish Cypriot side, as one of the two politically equal sides in Cyprus, intends to ensure the full enjoyment by the Turkish Cypriot

inhabitants of the village of their inalienable right to freely communicate with their fellow nationals by improving the present telecommunication link. Whereas each Greek Cypriot household in the village has a telephone installed, and despite the fact that we have given due notification to UNFICYP as regards our intention, the Greek Cypriot Administration has reacted, once again, irrationally to our humanitarian endeavour; consequently stepping-up the Greek Cypriot military presence in the area and conducting dubious military activities, thereby raising the spectre of an escalation of tension in the area.

The military activities - which encompass a one kilometre radius due south of Pyla - being conducted under the guise of a so-called "military exercise", involve, in addition to the normal Greek Cypriot military presence in the area, a tank squadron reinforced by armoured carriers, anti-tank weapons and 25 to 30 soldiers in full battle gear. This posture, which undermines the military status quo in the area, constitutes a threat to the Turkish Cypriot inhabitants of Pyla. Despite having given notification to UNFICYP that their "military exercises" were scheduled for the week of 13 to 20 May, ending thereafter, the increased Greek Cypriot military presence in the area persists and fortification measures continue unabated.

In spite of all this, the Turkish Cypriot side has been following the developments in a calm and even-tempered manner and we have not reciprocated and taken any additional military measures which would have led to an escalation of tension in the area. However, it goes without saying that, the present situation in the area carries with it the risk of an escalation.

In bringing the dire developments in Pyla to your attention, I particularly wish to single out two aspects which are of special importance when viewed against the background of the ongoing search for an agreed solution of the Cyprus problem. First, in parallel to Your Excellency's Mission of Good Offices, the Turkish Cypriot side's posture has consistently been one of deconfrontation. The actions of the Greek Cypriots in Pyla, by contrast, have shown to us that the Greek Cypriot posture is one of confrontation.

Second, this unique village is in actual fact a place of constant tension due to the efforts of the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus to extend its sovereignty over the whole village of Pyla. As the recent developments have demonstrated, even in this mixed village in the Buffer Zone, the Greek Cypriot side is unwilling to tolerate and acknowledge the social, cultural, and religious rights of the Turkish Cypriot villagers, since the full enjoyment by the Turkish Cypriots of their rights and liberties comes into conflict with the Greek Cypriots' unacceptable objective of extending their sovereignty over Pyla. Our position is that by virtue of its equal political status in Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriot side has jurisdiction, in parallel with the Greek Cypriot side, in Pyla, and we have no intention of forgoing this jurisdiction.

It should also be stressed that the Greek Cypriot side, by escalating its hostile policy and insisting on the path of confrontation, is once again acting in blatant contravention of paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 649 (1990), which calls upon "the parties concerned to refrain from any action that could aggravate the situation". Any escalation of tension in Pyla will set a bad example and constitute an obstacle in the way of facilitating an agreed settlement of the Cyprus problem. It is obvious that "Pyla" has now become a metaphor for the unwillingness of the Greek Cypriots to live together and share power with the Turkish Cypriots. We now expect that UNFICYP takes the necessary steps for the restoration of the normal conditions and status quo in Pyla.

(Signed) Rauf R. DENKTAŞ
President